

Toward a New Creative Scholarship of Educational Development: The Teaching and Learning Project and an Opening to Discourse

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ABSTRACT

This invited essay of *To Improve the Academy's* special feature on Creative Scholarship presents one example of creative scholarship in educational development as a forward to other forms and approaches in the special feature. This example, the Teaching and Learning Project, merges documentary and art photography traditions with faculty consultation. Following a review of the literatures of visual interpretation and instructional consultation, along with their intersection, the essay presents the Teaching and Learning Project in three ways: (1) as images, analyzed using the disciplinary grounding of the visual arts; (2) as a consultation methodology and an educational development practice; and (3) as a research project using a social science-based approach (grounded theory) exploring the experience of the subjects photographed. Finally, as a segue to the rest of the *TIA* special feature, this invited essay addresses the transformative nature of creative scholarship and its implications for the field of educational development.

INTRODUCTION

Educational development has historically attracted practitioners from all disciplines in the academy (Little 2014). This disciplinary diversity is important to faculty, validating in the context of higher education and attractive to new practitioners. For example, even skeptical faculty can find entry into the literature of educational development through research that addresses their discipline-centric concerns.

At the same time, the field of educational development has developed its own scholarly traditions, largely borrowed from the social sciences, both in terms of method and dissemination. While this scholarly approach has many benefits, it may not always reflect the disciplinary diversity of the field. Those who have come to it from the creative disciplines, such as creative writing, performance, or visual arts, have—like practitioners from the social sciences—brought their own vernacular to educational development practice. The University of Michigan CRLT Players, for example, have applied the traditions of performing arts to their practice with great success. While the effectiveness of their work can be researched and published in the tradition of the social sciences, the printed page often falls short of conveying the full impact of the work.

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The arts have the potential to inform our work in ways that are otherwise inaccessible. As Barbara Kruger explains, art “can be defined as the ability, through visual, verbal, gestural, and musical means, to objectify one’s experience of the world: to show and tell, through a kind of eloquent shorthand, how it feels to be alive.” Educational development’s informal discourse is already informed by this eloquent shorthand; for example, McSweeney’s send-up of rubrics—[“My Grading Scale for the Fall Semester, Composed Entirely of Samuel Beckett Quotes”](#)—evokes a laugh in many if not most academics who read student work regularly, but its literary approach also captures something real and important about the dual ambiguity and specificity of rubrics, the hope and despair of teaching, and the absurdity of being a student (Bell 2012). Readers immediately recognize the truth of characterizing a “B” paper with the phrase, “The earth makes a sound as of sighs”—communicating both the potential and the not-quite-there quality of a B, as well as the teacher’s anticipation and disappointment, with a grace and economy that are the hallmarks of creative disciplines.

This special feature on Creative Scholarship acknowledges both educational development’s disciplinary diversity and the limitations of traditional research and publishing to fully capture it. This focus has created a space for educational development migrants from creative disciplines to publish their scholarly work, and it has offered a blank canvas for practitioners from all disciplines to think in new, creative ways about both their work and its dissemination. The special feature drew 49 volunteer reviewers and a robust set of submissions—evidence of the interest and extant creativity already at work in the field of educational development.

This invited essay presents one example of creative scholarship in educational development as a forward to other forms and approaches in the special feature. That example, the Teaching and Learning Project is driven by four goals, aligned with its roots in educational development and photography:

1. Produce images of the work that takes place in higher education, specifically in those areas directly related to teaching and learning.
2. Put these images in the hands of faculty participants and staff at centers for teaching and learning so they can better illustrate their work and values to both internal and external audiences.
3. Partner with teaching center staff to provide photo-based faculty consultations.
4. Provide training for center staff in documenting faculty work visually, so that when the project leaves a campus, they may continue to employ the methods in service to their unique educational development goals.

The visual methods in the Teaching and Learning Project are informed in scholarly ways by the history of Martin Springborg’s discipline, art/photography. In this respect, the photographic essay aspect of the project is part of an ongoing dialogue focused on the visual/photographic representation of culture—specifically the culture of higher education. As art, it serves Kruger’s definition of an “eloquent shorthand” for lived experience in higher education. At the same time, the project has produced a new method of faculty consultation, which lends itself to formal study through a qualitative research methodology developed in the social sciences. But unlike typical qualitative data, the Teaching and Learning Project presents a unique combination of text and

images, of data and art. These two distinct sides allow new dimensions of reflection and insight into faculty consultation, faculty and student experience, and educational development.

Indeed, juxtapositions between traditional and creative scholarship, such as the Teaching and Learning Project and other works in this special feature, can prompt the field of educational development to explore and analyze aspects of our collective practice from the important but underutilized perspectives available from creative disciplines. For example, educational developers in the business of reaching people and prompting reflection and action deal in text, image, and metaphor constantly—yet how often are we aware of the influences and implications of our creative and aesthetic decisions? In addition, form may exert influence on the content of our work, with images, words, and other aspects of portrayal potentially limiting or expanding what and how one thinks about the research and practice of educational development. The nature of shared imagery about educational development also has a powerful role to play in advancing institutional goals and transformations. Where standard discourse fails, the creative disciplines may at times help to rapidly share current realities and visions for the future.

At Caltech during an era of building a new center and marshaling greater faculty and student engagement in teaching practice, photographs depicting the current, real, and varied teaching and learning contexts helped raise visibility and refresh the institution's self concept. Adding new collective images to the repeated, often staged images of professors in front of equation-filled chalkboards speaking to rooms full of students, especially those showing the intensity and authenticity of students and teachers in the act of advancing scientific and other forms of knowledge, helped the institution jumpstart greater interest and discourse about teaching.

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In the rest of this article, after a brief review of the literatures of visual interpretation and instructional consultation and their intersection in the Teaching and Learning Project, we present the project in three ways: (1) as images, analyzed using the disciplinary grounding of the visual arts; (2) as a consultation methodology and an educational development practice; and (3) as a research project using a social science-based approach (grounded theory) exploring the experience of the subjects photographed. Finally, in conclusion and as a segue to the rest of the *TIA* special feature, we discuss the transformative nature of creative scholarship and its implications for the field of educational development.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: Creative Disciplines, Educational Development, and the Teaching and Learning Project

The literatures relevant to the present work include several distinct disciplines: image making, visual interpretation, and educational consultation. These literatures are in conversation in new ways in our relatively young field of educational development in higher education, producing an emerging set of influences for creative scholarship in the Teaching and Learning Project. Throughout this special feature, readers will find literatures of other creative disciplines—from song to theatre to visual culture—referenced as well.

(a) Literature of image making and visual interpretation.

Since the inception of visual arts as a discipline within the modern academy, practitioners and faculty have worked to develop its formal language, interpretation methods, and critique practices. These disciplinary standards can be broadly applicable to visual communication (Wells 2004), but often more specific versions aid comprehension and appreciation of visual messages in specific media, such as photography, painting, drawing, and other forms (Barrett 2011).

In the Teaching and Learning Project, we employ fundamental ways of “reading,” understanding, and interpreting photographs, similar to those often addressed in beginning photography courses. These methods are drawn from texts such as *Criticizing Photographs* (Barrett 2006) and *I Wanna Take Me a Picture: Teaching Photography and Writing to Children* (Ewald & Lightfoot 2001). The latter pairs photographic image making with reflective writing, and it has been an invaluable resource for the Teaching and Learning Project, as participants in the project are asked to reflect on photographs made of them.

Other texts that address photography’s place in modern culture, like Susan Sontag’s *On Photography* (2001) and Robert Adams’ *Why People Photograph* (1994) also informed the faculty consultation method described below—specifically those held with faculty teaching in arts disciplines or with backgrounds in art or photography. *On Photography* addresses the medium’s history and practice, as well as why photographs are so cherished. It is common reading in most art photography programs. Likewise, *Why People Photograph* is a collection of essays on what drives people to make photographs: to document events and everyday happenings in still images. These themes became prompts for reflection on images of teaching in consultation with faculty.

More broadly, texts such as John Berger’s *Ways of Seeing* (1972) explain how all visual arts inform the way we experience the world around us. Stemming from a BBC television series of the same title, the book teaches us how to see without the obstruction of all that we have come to know about objects around us. At the same time, the text offers specific ideas about photography that are relevant to the Teaching and Learning Project and its use in faculty consultation. Berger writes:

Every image embodies a way of seeing. Even a photograph. For photographs are not, as is often assumed, a mechanical record. Every time we look at a photograph, we are aware, however slightly, of the photographer selecting that sight from an infinity of other possible sights. This is true even in the most casual family snapshot. The photographer’s way of seeing is reflected in his choice of subject. (Berger 1972)

This idea, that the photographer is present in every photograph, has led to key questions in photo-based faculty consultations about participants’ perceptions of the person making the photographs and how these perceptions affect the way they see and interpret the images made

of their teaching practice or other academic work. This idea also leads to questions about subjectivity in making any images of teaching, photographs and video included.

Taking the idea of subjectivity further, we learn from other well-known documentary projects, such as the Farm Securities Act-sponsored photography of the Great Depression, how a photographer's post-production edits to their images can and do change a photograph's message. In *Doing Documentary Work* (1997), Robert Coles discusses how Dorothea Lange and other FSA photographers cropped or otherwise edited their photographs to create the sense of a more dire situation than what may have been in front of their cameras. We learn from documentary traditions that embrace this kind of control over message, as well as from those that do not, striving for as true an interpretation as is possible, that the visual message has great power to influence a viewer's understanding. In the Teaching and Learning Project, this insight has led to a selection and viewing process committed to showing as many *different* views of participants' classes as possible, rather than conveying a single message about their teaching practice.

(b) Literature of educational consultation

Since the 1970s, methods of instructional consultation with faculty and other teachers in college and university CTLs have been mainstays of educational development and as such are well documented in the literature. Examples of early work documented common practices (Bergquist and Phillips 1977) and studied effects of instructional consultation on teaching practice (Erickson and Erickson 1979) and personal growth (Sorcinelli 1982). Later studies investigated a variety of applications and effects, such as the longer-term impact of consultation on teaching practice (Piccinin 1999); and effects of specific forms of consultation, such as those involving student ratings of instruction as a source of feedback (Hampton and Reiser 2004; Penny and Coe 2004). More recent work examines comprehensive evaluation methods for determining the effectiveness of instructional consultations (Brinkley-Etzkorn et al. 2016).

A common framework for such instructional consultation includes three or four distinct stages: gathering information (sometimes included as part of the next phase), analyzing teaching, finding strategies for improvement, and reviewing or assessing the effect of intervention (Sorcinelli 1982; Brinko 1997). Other articulations of consultation essentials broadened these phases into principles, making them adaptable to a wide variety of specific contexts and methods. Morrison (1997) defines essential characteristics of instructional consultation as (a) built on reflective practice, (b) voluntary and formative, (c) multi-phased, such that there is contact between instructor and consultant at several points in time, and (d) occurring in a time-frame set together by instructor and consultant.

This framing of instructional consultation shows the strong influence of concepts of reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action (Schon 1983; Taylor-Way and Brinko 1989). In particular, consultation methods aim to systematically draw on materials, information, and data within a reflective context to help instructors recall and process key dimensions of teaching practice after the teaching has occurred. Through consultation, a key goal is to develop strategies for

instructors to apply when they return to practice. Materials, information, and data used in consultation have included student feedback in the form of midterm or end-of-term surveys or student ratings of instruction (Theall and Franklin 1997; Penny and Coe 2004); qualitative notes and/or quantitative data recorded by a consultant during a classroom observation (Lewis 1997; Smith et al. 2013); summaries of small group instructional discussions or diagnoses (SGIDs)—a structured focus-group like discussion that a consultant can conduct with students when the instructor is absent (Tiberius 1997; Coffman 1998); and video recordings of classroom instruction (Pinsky & Wipf 2000, Lonoff 1997, Krupnick 1994, Brinko 1993). Consultants draw on these materials to help identify and investigate aspects of teaching that may be productive foci for reflection, use open-ended prompts to engage the instructor in reflection, and ultimately conceptualize, reframe, and generate principles and strategies for future application (Taylor-Way and Brinko 1989).

The use of photographs as the focus of reflection in the Teaching and Learning Project draws upon both the overall characteristics of instructional consultation summarized above, and in particular the methods associated with use of video in instructional consultation practice. Using video in such consultations is a long-standing practice, dating back to the 1970s (Pinsky & Wipf 2000, Lonoff 1997, Krupnick 1994, Brinko 1993). The literature on the use of video in faculty consultations reflects a relatively standard practice that includes several steps (Krupnick 1994, Lonoff 1997). The first of these steps is capturing the raw data, or footage. This is typically done by trained CTL staff or students, normally at the request of the instructor. Technological solutions now exist for real-time notation of video by a consultant during recording, thus combining observational data with video material (Nakajima 2012). Once the video is made, a viewing session is scheduled for an instructional consultant to discuss the footage with the faculty member. To encourage reflection through dialogue and downplay the raw self-criticism that may accompany viewing video of oneself, an instructor may be given a copy of, or access to, their classroom video after first session has occurred. Repeat or follow-up sessions may be scheduled as needed to delve deeper into specific parts of the video.

The use of still photographs in faculty consultation draws upon these video-based methods to prompt discussion with faculty about their teaching. The photographer is invited to make images in an instructor's class. The instructor then reviews the photographs of their own class, and, with the help of educational developer(s), comes to conclusions about their teaching, students, and learning environment.

While there is an absence of literature documenting photography's use in teaching consultations, the value of faculty seeing, and through seeing reflecting on their teaching practice, has been discussed. For example, in *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*, Schon lingers on the importance of reflection on one's teaching practice and the act of seeing as part of that reflection:

When a practitioner makes sense of a situation he perceives to be unique, he sees it as something already present in his repertoire. To see *this* site as *that* one is not to subsume the first under a familiar category or rule. It is, rather, to see the unfamiliar,

unique situation as both similar to and different from the familiar one, without at first being able to say similar or different with respect to what. The familiar situation functions as a precedent, or a metaphor, or... an exemplar for the unfamiliar one. (Schön 1983: 138; author's emphasis)

Whether photography or video is used to trigger this kind of reflection, each brings the advantage of distance from the moment in question—an opportunity to step outside of the moment and see it at once both familiar and unfamiliar (Barrett 2011)—and in so doing, develop one's teaching practice

TEACHING AND LEARNING PROJECT: The Photographs

The photographs in the Teaching and Learning Project draw upon art and documentary photography traditions in order to prompt faculty to reflect on their teaching practice and speak to audiences about the state of higher education, both internal and external to post-secondary institutions. The project is often compared to *The Americans*, one of artist Robert Frank's more broadly known works, because the photographs in both projects offer a more realistic, less contrived view of their subjects than what is depicted in popular media. To produce *The Americans* in 1955-1957 Frank took a series of road trips, travelling all over the United States to make photographs of people in major cities and rural communities. He made these photographs in a candid style, often associated with street photographers. Because of the style and the sheer number of photographs he made (more than 10,000) for the project, Frank offers viewers as true and natural a representation of the subjects as is possible via still images.

In its earliest stages, the Teaching and Learning Project was one of Springborg's beginning photography course assignments, intended to infuse student-faculty collaborative work—a form of undergraduate research or scholarship—into his classes. Informed by the study of Robert Frank and other photographers, students were asked to produce documentary photographs of their college experience in a similar style. Working in partnership with his students, Springborg made photographs of his experience as a faculty member. The combined images were shared, discussed, and combined to produce a collaborative photographic essay at the end of the semester.

Much like Robert Frank's photographs of Americans offered an alternative to how popular media depicted the American people and their lifestyles, the photographs produced in Springborg's early photography classes were combating the images of college most prominent in popular media and culture. For example, typical college marketing photographs tend to feature students in idyllic situations in which they are always friends, have plenty of help, and are engaged in one-on-one instructor time. The photographs made by students in Springborg's classes showed some of these things, but also presented the viewer with the realities of college such as working part-time or full-time to pay for it, and/or raising children. Likewise, Springborg's photographs of faculty work showed students a side of their instructors' lives they had never imagined, such as service and scholarship. Students soon realized the image they had developed of college

faculty work was not entirely based in reality. See Gallery 1, “Teaching and Learning Project: Early Work,” for examples of photographs from these classes.



Figure 1^c: Teaching and Learning Project: Early Work. Photographs made by Springborg and students in his beginning photography classes documenting often unseen aspects of student and faculty work-lives in higher education. Please visit the online gallery to see individual photographs in greater detail: <https://goo.gl/photos/BKRGHpBoegNVYsvFA>

Since then, Springborg has continued the work as a national documentary project. His approach to photographing faculty and administrative work in higher education today is still in keeping with traditions established by Robert Frank and other early street photographers, including the style and number of images he makes during each campus visit as well as the diversity of subjects. Practically speaking, Springborg typically makes photographs at a particular campus over the course of several days. These visits are often arranged by a CTL or other office and include a

^c Photographic collages and the original images from which they derive (Figures 1-5) are © 2013-2015 Martin Springborg and used with permission.

wide variety of settings and subjects: classes in session across disciplines, styles of teaching, and instructional settings; administrative meetings and extracurricular discussions and events; informal student-faculty interactions; educational development programs and services. Recent photographs have come from a diversity of institutional types, from private, community, and technical colleges in Minnesota, to doctoral and research universities such as Caltech, Marquette University, and Texas Tech University, to ten different campuses in the Penn State University system. See Gallery 2, “Teaching and Learning Project: Diversity in Teaching Settings,” for examples of this range of subjects and settings. All subjects photographed do so willingly: faculty, students, staff, and others sign photographic release forms allowing the images to be displayed and shared by Springborg as part of the national Teaching and Learning Project, as well as by the institution.



Figure 2: Teaching and Learning Project: Diversity in Teaching Settings. Photographs from a wide range of disciplines, campus settings, and institutional types. Please visit the online gallery to see individual photographs in greater detail: <https://goo.gl/photos/pAp5T5AKM5yJWzMc9>.

Springborg is not concerned with traditional and formal beauty in the images so much as he is with conveying a sense of atmosphere. The photographs are more about documenting this environment and its people, as well as helping himself and others understand it through sides

mostly unseen by the general public. The choice to show them (to faculty as well as in publication and exhibition) in black and white is about stripping away unnecessary or distracting visual information so viewers can focus more on the architecture of the spaces as well as people's expressions and actions. Through the use of light and shallow depth of field, Springborg often draws viewers' attention to spaces—nooks and crannies of classrooms and study spaces, faculty offices, and off-campus meetings—as well as to the more intimate and fleeting moments not typically visible. He is often drawn to the icons of higher education as well, such as desks, paperwork, chalkboards, spreadsheets, etc., and frequently uses these objects as focal points in telling the story of the faculty, staff, and students he works with. See Gallery 3 for examples.



Figure 3: Teaching and Learning Project: Spaces Unseen. The spaces mostly unseen or unnoticed by those immediately outside the world of the subjects' who occupy them. Please visit the online gallery to see individual photographs in greater detail:

<https://goo.gl/photos/HWkbR5dZFDTEt5LN8>

Faculty, staff, and students who participate in the Teaching and Learning Project are often drawn to the project images because they are unlike the photographs they are used to seeing of

life and work at their institutions. Because the photographs are just as much about documenting environments as they are about documenting people, they emphasize work and points of connection on the periphery of what is more easily seen on college or university campuses. Teaching moments, such as those represented in Gallery 4, “Teaching and Learning Project: Teaching Moments” and collaborations—or the potential for collaborations vital to student success—those that take place between students, faculty, administrators, community, and even family members—are also visible when the work is exhibited.



Figure 4: Teaching and Learning Project: Teaching Moments. Images of teaching are used in faculty consultation also, when exhibited more broadly, bring the classroom to those in other disciplines or viewers outside of the institution or of higher education. Please visit the online gallery to see individual photographs in greater detail:

<https://goo.gl/photos/rNsUyPdWKRzA5J5B8>

The Teaching and Learning Project also has a certain personal/private duality in its purpose and presentation. When the photographs are presented to the instructors featured in the images (more on this below, under Photo-Based Consultation Method), they are discussed in the context of instructors’ own experience and professional practice. When other viewers, in either

traditional art venues, campus exhibitions, or academic journals, see the project images, themes emerge about student, faculty, and administrative work in higher education that speak to or resonate with a broader audience. This is particularly notable when the photographs are displayed in galleries at participating campuses, where they are viewed in a very public setting and in an artistic context, often with a reception and/or lecture attended by faculty and staff from various campus departments and sectors. Seeing their work represented as in Gallery 5, “Teaching and Learning Project: Work Environments and Campus Sectors,” elicits a sense of acknowledgment and sparks conversations that may otherwise not take place.



Figure 5: Teaching and Learning Project: Work Environments and Campus Sectors. Photographs featuring the unique environments and work of those in various campus sectors often spark conversations about the interconnectedness of faculty, staff, and administrators working within them. Please visit the online gallery to see individual photographs in greater detail: <https://goo.gl/photos/t8rcxsGBa7kUjffv9>

PHOTO-BASED CONSULTATION METHOD

The new photo-based consultation method presented and studied here is closely connected to general instructional consultation methods, and more specifically, to those employed with video-based consultations, with several key differences. The process is as follows. First, an instructor opts in to the process, responding affirmatively to an invitation to have their class photographed by Springborg as part of a campus visit for the Teaching and Learning Project. In the future, faculty could request a photographic class observation and consultation from a CTL offering photo-based consultations. All students and faculty who appear in photographs sign a photographic consent, as explained above; students who do not wish to appear in photographs are simply not included. Once a set of photographs has been edited (selected, and assembled in an online gallery, with an emphasis on presenting a wide range of views and subjects from the class, the instructor receives by email a link to a private image gallery along with some guiding questions and an invitation to participate in a consultation. The instructor may choose to end the process here, and simply have the photographs for their own use. Most have wanted to discuss the photographs via consultation.

Note that here the photo-based consultation process differs from many video-based methods, as the instructor receives the images and is invited to examine them before the consultation. Although taking and looking at informal snapshots of one's family, friends, and everyday life is utterly familiar, most participants in the Teaching and Learning Project have little formal experience with photography as an artistic medium. Therefore, they may not approach photo-based consultations with experience in looking critically at photographs. The method is designed to assist instructors in seeing "photographically," in looking beyond the main subject in the still images, and in taking into consideration the meaning of objects of lesser prominence, in "reading" photographs (Ewald & Lightfoot 2001). In this context, it is helpful to pose some reflective questions to the instructor in advance of the consultation, so that everyone comes to the consultation ready to have a discussion of the images' subject matter and meaning and how that relates back to the instructor's interpretation and reflection on their teaching practice. This important divergence from other instructional consultation methods incorporates the creative scholarship of photography into the process, providing faculty with tools particularly suited to the medium—a unique strength of the scholarship of the visual arts.

The pre-consultation reflective prompts, which instructors receive with their online gallery of photographs, are adapted from "I Wanna Take Me a Picture" (Ewald & Lightfoot 2001):

- 1) List or make a few mental notes of various things you see in each image. Consider the main focal point(s) as well as other, less noticeable objects.
- 2) Also consider how the images reference what may be happening beyond their borders or frames. What do these references say about the larger classroom environment or dynamic?

3) This may seem odd, but another important element to think about is the photographer. As a faculty member in higher education, I am an insider. As someone external to [subject's institution], I am an outsider. Do you think my perspective influenced the decisions I made while making these photographs? If so, how does that affect your understanding of them?

This last guiding suggestion is particular to photographs made by Springborg as part of the national Teaching and Learning Project documentary project, but a CTL offering photo-based consultations could still ask a reflective question about the photographer's perspective. Such a question is not typically part of the video-based instructional consultation process. It introduces the idea of subjectivity in the collecting of data (here, the making of images). While it is true that one can strive for the complete removal of subjectivity in the making of video or photographs of any situation, including teaching, the videographer or photographer's view or bias is never truly absent from the resulting images or footage. Decisions about camera placement and the framing of shots—even those that are made when a camera is static and without an active cameraperson managing each shot—will have an impact on how the viewer interprets the resulting images (Bordwell and Thompson 1993). In the Teaching and Learning Project, we have embraced this idea rather than attempted to avoid it. It has sparked interesting and relevant discussion with instructors and has reinforced the sense that the person making a video or photographs of faculty is an important consideration.

Depending on scheduling, each participating instructor has about a week to look at their photographs and consider the guiding questions above. During the actual consultation session, the consultant(s) use a written guide to prompt discussion of images and themes to structure the session (Table 1: Photo-based consultation guide). We developed the questions with attention to encouraging an open dialogue, in order to not be overly restrictive or limiting in seeking responses from faculty participants. Some of the prompts are related to research questions (see below section on Qualitative Research). The script brings a great deal of consistency to the process, and has elicited unique and reflective responses from faculty.

Consultation Section	Questions and Prompts
Introduction	Consultants offer a brief summary of the Teaching and Learning project Teaching and Learning project overall; consultants briefly provide context for photo-based consultation as one of multiple forms of instructional consultation (video, classroom observation, etc.).
Instructor's Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is this a new course/long-standing course? • What is your perspective on this term: business as usual? Have there been recent changes made to the curriculum or course format? • What is your general read on how the class is going so far?
Observation of photographs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looking at the photographs, what do you see? • (Discussion based on questions/guidance in looking at photographs prior to this interview; often referring to specific photographs or sequences of photographs). • What stands out to you in the photograph(s)? • Additional prompts as appropriate, e.g., tell me more about that; what else do you see here; why do you think so? • Were there any surprises for you in these photographs (environment, students, interactions, self)
Role of editing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is editing a factor in these photographs? • If you were to edit a set of ideal class photographs, what would you want viewers to see? • Do you think this set of photographs properly conveys your work? Why/why not?
Wrap up	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What do still images (vs. written or other feedback) prompt in terms of reflections on your teaching practice and/or student learning? • If you have had video made of your teaching (for consult or other), how do still photographs compare to that medium? • Would you be open to sharing these images with their colleagues? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ What forum (existing or new) do you think would be most appropriate for that kind of sharing? • How do you feel about the privacy of your teaching practice before and after this experience? • What benefits, if any, can you see in making your work public (to colleagues across campus, across the country)? • Do you have any last thoughts on the project or process?

Table 1: Photo-based consultation guide.

These questions and prompts are used as a guide for the consultant(s) conducting the photo-based consultation. The consultation is done verbally, with the guide viewed only by the consultants, who follow the overall development of the questions and prompts, but may also follow-up on particular points with more general reflective prompts to elicit deeper discussion (e.g., Could you say more about that? In what photograph(s) do you see that happening? Let's look together at that. What do you mean by that? Etc.)

The photo-based instructional consultations typically lasted about an hour and have mostly been conducted via Skype, with three parties (the authors and the instructor) joining the conversation from different locations. This creates a unique environment that can be somewhat freeing, as the computer screen offers several affordances for communication in this context. At the beginning of the Skype session, the consultants suggest that the instructor have the online image gallery open next to the Skype window, and remind them that everyone can easily pull up the same photograph by referring to the shared image number. This format is at once intimate (for sharing personal insights about teaching and learning) and open to those involved in the consultation. As is true of all consultations, this is an important aspect of the method, allowing for sometimes-sensitive observations about the photographs or personal reflections to be shared.

It should be noted that we have developed this method over time. The earliest consultations were not as structured. In those first consultations, we simply provided faculty with online galleries of photographs made during their classes and other work related to teaching, then asked them to tell us about the context (course, etc.), current practice, and what they observed in the photographs. This much looser approach sometimes led to great discussions; in other cases, consultations were quite brief, leading us to elaborate on the prompts to facilitate reflection more consistently.

QUALITATIVE RESEARCH ON PHOTO-BASED CONSULTATIONS

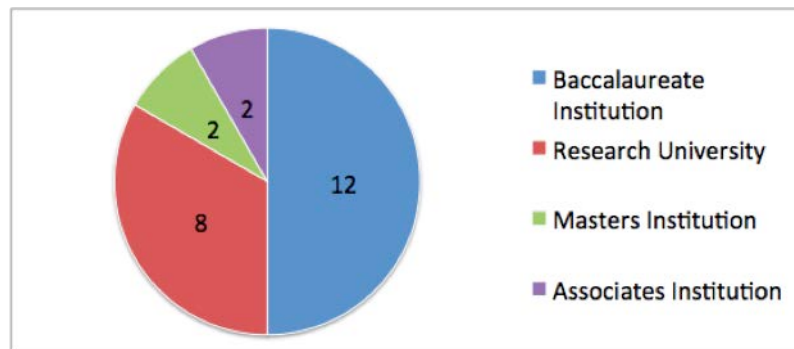
Alongside the direct analysis and presentation of the photographs, and in concert with the development of a new approach to instructional consultation based on the creative discipline of photography, we examined qualitatively the process and outcomes of these consultations through a research approach rooted in the social sciences. Specifically, a grounded theory methodology provides insight into the potential of the Teaching and Learning Project to help transform faculty, students, pedagogy, and culture. This more traditional scholarly approach presents a complementary viewpoint to the more creative approach presented above. We encourage readers to consider how their own experience of viewing the photographs may influence their understanding of the research results, and how their encounter with the research findings may speak to their experience of seeing the photographs.

The research portion of the project addresses the following questions:

1. Do the photographs have an impact on the faculty members' perceptions or understanding of their teaching practice?
2. What do the photo-based consultations reveal for faculty members about their teaching practice or related topics?
3. How do participants feel about the privacy of their teaching practice before and after the photographs and consultation process?
4. What specific benefits, if any, can they see in making their work public?

The research to date includes 24 consultations across a range of institutions and disciplines, conducted in 2014 and 2015 (Figure 6). The sample was drawn from faculty photographed as part of the Teaching and Learning Project. These photographic engagements were arranged by campus leaders or administrators involved in supporting and/or advancing teaching and learning on their campuses (e.g., directors of centers for teaching and learning, deans, and provosts). These hosts then directly invited faculty to have their classes photographed, with access to a description of the national photographic essay project, and in some cases, an expression of local, campus-based goals or potential products, such as a later photographic exhibit, that might emerge from the institution's participation. Faculty were free to decline to be photographed.

(a)



(b)

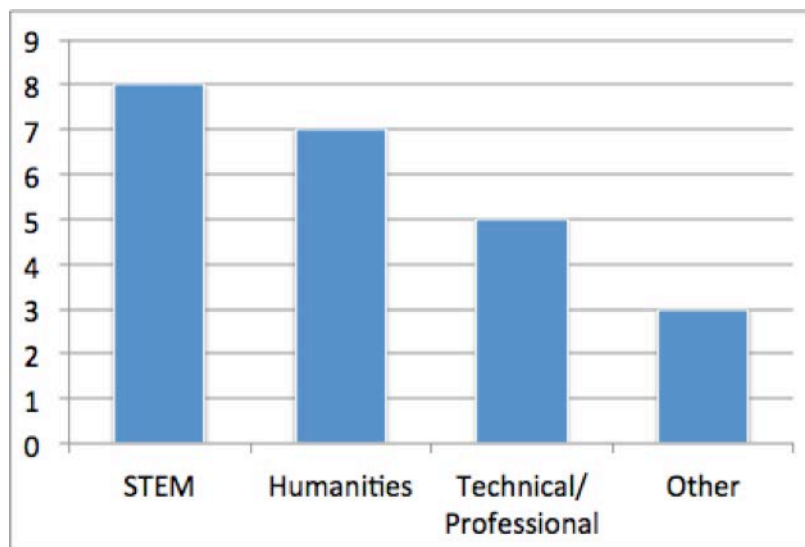


FIGURE 6: (a) Institution types and (b) disciplines represented in the 24 consultations studied.

Faculty were given access to a private digital album with an edited set of photographs of their own course, and/or other settings in which they were photographed (e.g., office, meetings). At that time, they were also invited to have a consultation based on the photographs. Both the consultation and participation in the research project were completely voluntary and were not

incentivized beyond the potential inherent benefits. If they elected to schedule a consultation, they were also free to consent or decline to have the anonymous notes from the consultation included in the research study.

Consultations were conducted according to the protocol described above. Notes documenting the participant and consultant comments were typed in real time by one of the two researchers while the other facilitated the consultation itself; notes were verbatim or very closely paraphrased. Each digital notes document contained a unique, arbitrary four-digit number, the institutional category (simplified Carnegie classification), and disciplinary category, with no information that could identify the faculty participant. Where photographs were discussed, no record of the specific images was included in the notes, thus divorcing the consultation data from the photographs themselves. As noted above, the subjects—both faculty and students—signed photographic consent forms, which applied to the photographs only, allowing the photographer, the institution, and the faculty member to reproduce and use the photographs. Separately, faculty participating as research subjects in the consultation process signed research consent forms, which applied to the qualitative data contained in the typed notes. The notes cannot be traced back to specific faculty or photographs. Figure 7 outlines the separate consent processes and anonymity for the photographs and the research study. The entire protocol was reviewed and approved by the Caltech IRB (Protocol #14-0436).

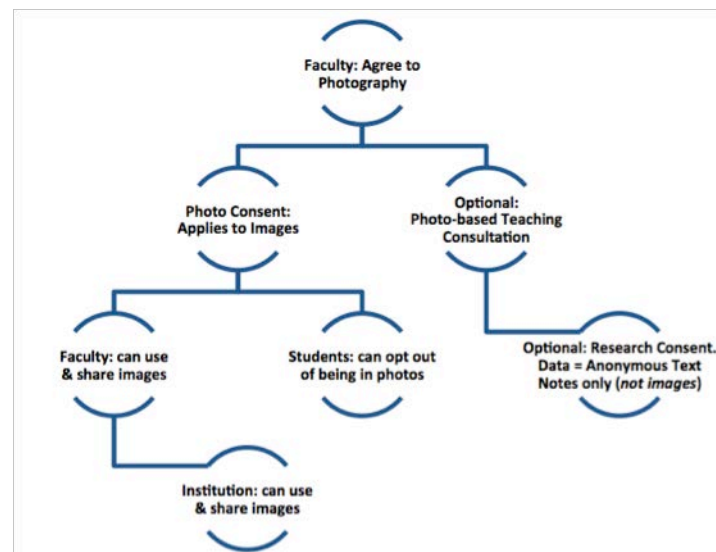


Figure 7: Flowchart of the consent process for photography, consultation, and research aspects of the Teaching and Learning Project.

In order to address the research questions, the electronic typed consultation notes were coded according to nine a priori codes, representing broad topical themes that are relevant to the research questions regarding teaching practice, and, based on the literature of consultation reviewed above, represent themes that would be expected topics in reflective consultations—e.g., perceptions or behaviors of students; aspects of teaching practice such as communication,

materials, changes; and campus culture (Table 2). This initial coding allowed us to locate themes for further analysis.

A Priori Codes	Selective Sub-codes for Incidents of Reflection
1. Students: Perception of 2. Students: Behavior 3. Students: Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About student(s): Reinforce notions • About student(s): New perspective/insight • About student(s): Observe qualities, actions • About student(s): Reflection on context beyond photo(s) • About student(s): Relationship or exchange • About student(s): Synthesis, Meaning making
4. Teaching Practice: Communication 5. Teaching Practice: Materials 6. Teaching Practice: Space 7. Teaching Practice: Self-reported Change 8. Teaching Practice: Other 9. Campus Culture	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • About teaching: Reinforce notions • About teaching: New perspective/insight • About teaching: Evaluating behavior(s) • About teaching: Expanding repertoire, tools • About teaching: Reflecting on intent, purpose • About teaching: Reflecting on practice (why, how) • About teaching: Reflecting on challenges • About teaching: Synthesis, meaning making

Table 2: A priori codes and selective sub-codes used for qualitative analysis of electronic, typed consultation notes.

High percentages of consultations included discussion of the themes represented by the a priori codes. Figure 8 shows the frequency with which the broad themes are present in the consultations. 70 to 100% of the consultations included discussion of all themes except “7. Teaching Practice: Self-reported Change,” which occurred in 46% of consultations. While no strictly comparable data exists for other forms of consultation, the result of nearly half of the consultees reporting for themselves an intended change in teaching practice is substantial.

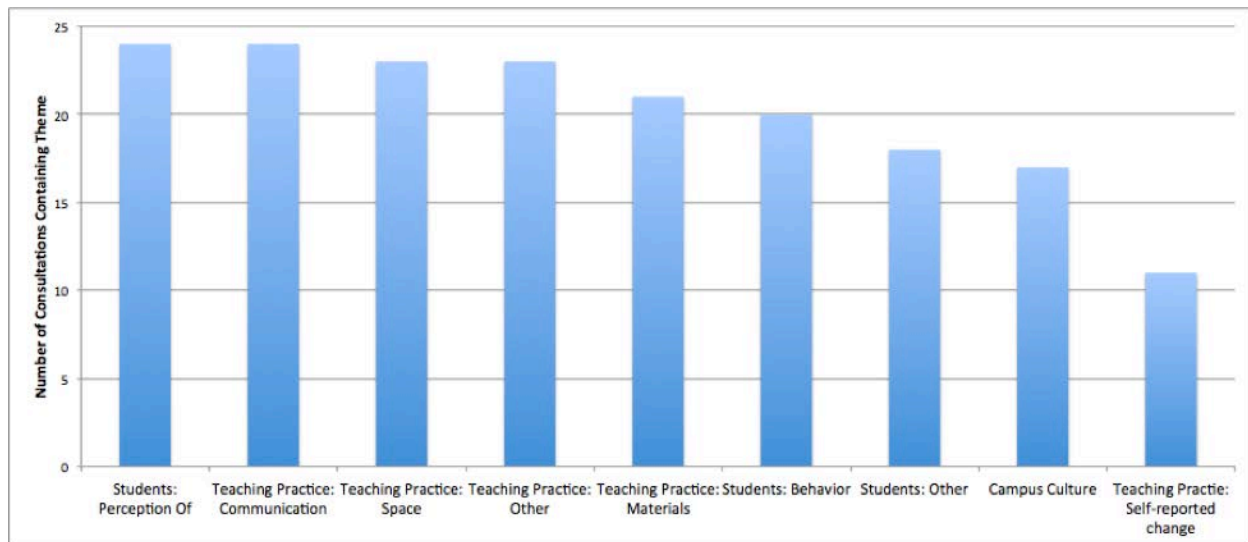


Figure 8: Frequency of themes in consultations.

While this analysis confirmed that the content of the photo-based consultations was eliciting discussion on a range of themes related to instructional practice, the next step in the grounded theory methodology enabled further probing into the degree to which faculty were meaningfully reflecting on their teaching—an action widely recognized to be a prerequisite to taking action and sustaining change in instructional practice. We identified segments of the transcripts representing incidents of reflection about students and teaching practice. The criteria for reflection were drawn from the literature of reflective practice in teaching: e.g., Shon’s articulation that reflective practice should “surface and criticize the tacit understandings that have grown up around the repetitive experiences of a specialized practice” and help “make new sense of the situations of uncertainty or uniqueness” (1983, p. 62); Brookfield’s explanation that reflective practices helps us “come to a clearer understanding of what we do and who we are” as an instructor (1995, p. 214); Johns’s explanation that reflective practice functions to “view and focus self within the context of [one’s] own lived experience in ways that enable [one] to confront, understand and work towards resolving the contradictions within [one’s] practice between what is desirable and actual practice” (2000, p. 34). Incidents of reflection in this study demonstrated one or more of the following traits, which could be applied to a variety of topics related to teaching:

- Articulate a previously tacit assumption or understanding.
- Critique or question a previously tacit assumption or understanding.
- Formulate a new understanding of an aspect of one’s practice.
- Develop a clearer sense of one’s identity as an instructor.
- Resolve a contradiction between desired and actual practice.
- Determine method(s) to implement in future settings, related to new understanding, identity, or resolution of contradiction.

All in all, the data from the 24 consultations produced over 100 incidents of reflection on a variety of topics, including teaching practice, students, self-concept or image, teaching materials and space, and the photo-based consultation process itself. Table 3 summarizes the topics represented in the incidents of reflection, including how many unique individuals exhibited such incidents in each topic area, and an illustrative example of each. These samples are meant to give the reader a sense of the depth and nature of these incidents.

Incidents of Reflection about:	Number of Incidents	Number of unique individuals	Example incident
The Consultation Process	34	21	"[This process] captures moments in time that in the heat of the battle you don't usually pick up on. I've been very interested in looking at these--it reinforces some things I'm trying to do; points out other things I'm not noticing. Not quite raising red flags, but raising my awareness about what might be going on. Am I getting excited about topic because I love it and thinking students are with me, but maybe they are leaning back or not as engaged?"
Teaching Practice	29	18	"I like the images of students taking notes. They show the students are engaged with the material. Especially students in the back of the classroom. I did not see that before. I'm mentally noting that maybe it's good that people move around in my classes. If you are disengaged, sitting in the same place could promote disengagement. Students being in their comfort zones, and that could be a good thing or a bad thing."
Students	22	12	"You develop these personal relationships with these students. In any of these personal relationships, I take them seriously. I want people to like me, I want to give back to them. When I look at these pictures, it feels like it's almost too intimate. I feel like they are giving me something really good. It's really coming back to me in these pictures."
Teaching Materials & Space	12	8	"[I] see the movement. I'm limited in how far I can move because of the setup. I spend a lot of time at the podium because that's where the computer is. I go over to the screen sometimes to highlight, but also use the pointer. The little slice of chalkboard between screen and podium is where I do most of my writing. Sometimes I travel to the other chalkboard area, but rarely."
Teacher Self Concept/Image	11	9	"I try to be relaxed. I think I'm relaxed, but somewhat formal. I do look very formal and stiff in these pictures. Maybe that's just me. I've never seen any images of myself teaching. The vision doesn't match the feeling I had of myself at the time."

Table 3: Incidents of reflection: frequency and examples.

Incidents of reflection were further sub-coded to better understand the nature of the reflections: whether the reflection was about students or about teaching, and whether the reflection reinforced existing notions, generated new insights, observed qualities or actions, evaluated behaviors, reflected on context beyond the photos, reflected about intent or purpose, addressed a relationship or exchange, presented a synthesis or meaning-making, or addressed other aspects of practice or challenges (See Table 2 for comprehensive list of selective sub-codes). This selective coding allowed for the creation of collections of reflections within theme and selective sub-code. Complete analysis of the incidents will be published in future articles, as the full analysis exceeds the scope of this opening essay. As a whole, though, these consultation data demonstrate a rich and deeply meaningful experience for the faculty who experienced this form of consultation.

What is perhaps more interesting in the context of examining the potential for creative scholarship is the contrast that the faculty expressed between photo-based consultation and prior instructional consultations they had experienced (e.g., video-based consultation or in-person classroom observation followed by consultation). The collection of incidents related to reflections on the consultation process reveal the syntheses in Table 4, with sample text included to elucidate the nature of each.

Synthesis regarding photo-based consultation	Sample statements from consultation notes
<p>The photographs are affirming to faculty members—showing them they have reached a certain level in their instruction, providing them with positive images of themselves as teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conveys the passion I have for the work I do • Pictures show...that part of what I feel is important about teaching. • Pictures seem to suggest that I'm carrying out what I set out to do long ago—to have interesting conversations with my students • Re-articulating mission, choosing words to describe who I am and what I do. The images could represent those things well. • Pleased to see myself interacting so much with students. • These photos make me realize that everything that I've been working on for years have developed into a great end product. • I realize now really important issues about my career and my students--what I do and don't do. I'll be teaching another ten years maybe. I want those ten years to be as outstanding as I can make them. This experience will be a factor in that • These photographs show me what I do--AND show students' reactions to what I'm doing. They reinforce what I try to do. • It's encouraging, helpful. Shows myself and my students. I have strong (mental) images of myself during teaching, but not stepping back to see us all together. Makes me even more interested in working with [the disengaged student] more.
<p>Still images give information that other consultation processes (written observation, video, etc.) do not. Most of this additional information has to do with students, giving faculty insight into their engagement, other actions</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • [There's a] high return: learning a lot about my students and myself by looking at these images. I've never seen a photo of myself teaching before—this is interesting to me. • With the still images, I am able to look at interactions. I see the expressions on faces, the gestures. The relationships. • In the still images, it gives me much more of an opportunity to look at what students are doing. It catches their expression, It catches their body language. • The still [images] seem to make me think about what's happening cognitively more deeply, whereas the videos are more focused, or make me focus more, on behaviors. • I think there's a lot that is lost when you have a moving image. There's a lot gained but a lot lost. When you have a still picture, you have an opportunity to reflect on the very nuanced details of what the scene captures. • Still images: gives me insight into the emotions of the students--in terms of their facial expression when I'm not around. • When you read someone's notes about your teaching, the narrative is already there...It's a more closed, specific perspective on your teaching...With the photos, the information is there, but the story is one you can take in many different ways....With an image, you're working with a lot of signifiers you can use. • It lets me see student engagement or disengagement, whereas lots of times you don't get that from someone doing a formal observation. Even if they mention it, the visual helps you there. Helps you see students who were engaged or not.

Table 4: Synthesis of reflections on the consultation process.

These syntheses demonstrate that photo-based consultation appears to be a viable new form of instructional consultation, prompting reflection and change, and providing a distinct set of insights compared to other forms. For example, the sense of affirmation of identity is a striking outcome, particularly alongside the access that photographs provide in a consultation setting to information and insights that appear to be distinct to this medium and format. While having a photographer present in the classroom might seem disruptive, only one of the 24 participants expressed that sentiment. Several participants also noted that having photographs taken and talking about them was less intimidating than other forms of consultation, potentially lowering barriers to consultation and providing new benefits, such as the affirmation of their practice and unique views of students. Ongoing research and further analysis of existing data from photo-based consultations focuses on examining the nature of instructor's insights about students and the practice of teaching, as well as evidence of intended change. Furthermore, we posit that applying a similar methodology to other forms of instructional consultation would be a fruitful direction for additional research, as the distinct affordances and benefits of consultation approaches drawing on a wide variety of evidence and media have not previously been articulated in the literature of educational development.

3. CONCLUSION

The Teaching and Learning project has advanced our ideas about the potential for deep integration of the arts in the field of educational development, particularly in ways that complement methods and approaches rooted in the social sciences. It has been transformative for us, personally, as the partnership between practitioners from very different parts of the academy has given us new insight in how we think about our own work. Even more exciting for both of us is finding that in most cases, for the faculty who have participated in the Teaching and Learning Project, it has been a transformative experience in some way as well. They have come away from the project with new ideas about their teaching practice and new insights about their students.

As guest co-editors of this special feature of *To Improve the Academy*, we have also had the privilege of working with colleagues across the country who are either partnering with faculty colleagues in the arts or are themselves using artistic or creative methods in their educational development practice. Based on their results, the inclusion of these non-traditional approaches to their work has also been transformative—both for themselves and colleagues as well as for the faculty they serve. The cases you'll read about in this issue imply the needs for and advantages of broad and ongoing consideration of creative scholarship in educational development. They also teach us that the application of creative disciplines to our work may be the key to reaching some audiences (faculty-artists as partners and faculty from various disciplines as participants) that may be disengaged from our programs and services, or from institution-wide priorities such as the systematic assessment of student learning.

Assuming these cases spark curiosity into how we might best partner with our colleagues in the arts or bring creative scholarship into our practice, this issue offers many possibilities. First,

Cruz's novel visual infographic, "The Scholarship of Educational Development: A Taxonomy" offers an accessible and compelling roadmap for the scholarship of our field. In "Receive, Reorganize, Return: Theatre as Creative Scholarship," Kaplan et al. explore the scholarly processes and outcomes involved in interactive theatre function within educational development in unique ways, including the "embodiment of research in three-dimensional characters." In "Don't Box Me in: Rubrics for Artists & Designers," Haugnes and Russell describe—through a narrative, process-oriented account, visual representation, and traditional research analysis—an instructor-centered approach to the development of rubrics in the arts. Lesser expands the focus of creative scholarship to music with "The Use of Song to Open an Educational Development Workshop: Exploratory Analysis and Reflections." Rossing and Hoffman-Longtin articulate the potential of the creative scholarship of improvisation in "Improv(ing) the Academy: Applied Improvisation as a Strategy for Educational Development." Finally, in "Subjectivities in the Sandbox: Discovering Bias through Visual Memo Writing," Lisi recounts how visually depicting (making sketches to go along with) her own data revealed her own subjectivities and biases during program evaluation.

Within this special focus on creative scholarship, we see implications for the future of educational development. At a minimum, the articles offer suggestions as to how we might rethink what we do. More broadly, the ideas presented here suggest what might be gained from our engagement in new methods. The possibilities for integrating creative scholarship into the practice of educational development are virtually limitless and depend largely on our own ability to imagine new ventures and collaborations or redesign existing programs or services. Through creative scholarship, we gain new techniques, new partners, and new approaches or new perspectives on our existing work. We also gain new ways to communicate about what we do—to new as well as long-standing audiences that need to see our work as vital to the academy.

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